

Determining the Level of Engagement in The Ohio State University Wellness Innovator Program

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Introduction/Background

- **Workplace Health Promotion (WHP) programs** promote individual health and well-being, reduce employer health care costs and increase productivity among employees¹.
- **Wellness Champions (WC)** are used to encourage co-workers to pursue healthy lifestyle behaviors^{1, 2, 3, 4}.
- The **Buckeye Wellness Innovator program (BWI)**, the WC team at Ohio State, has been in existence for over 4 years, and is part of the WHP at OSU.
- Preferred qualities and **demographics of WCs are unknown**, and there are significant research gaps on important components of a WC program³.
- Managerial support is an important factor for the success of WHP programs³ but **little evidence exists on the impact of managerial support on the WC level of engagement**

Research Questions

1. Are there **demographic differences among Wellness Innovators (WI) that are engaged or less engaged** in the Buckeye Wellness Innovator (BWI) program?
2. Are there perceived **differences in direct manager support among WI that are engaged or less engaged** in the BWI program?



Methods/Measurements

- Sample: current Buckeye Wellness Innovators (N=470)
- Measures: 9 question online survey
 - Perceived level of engagement* in BWI program
 - Perceived level of support from supervisor
 - Barriers to engagement
 - Factors influencing continued engagement
 - Primary reason for joining the program
 - Demographics
- Procedure: Survey link sent to all current Buckeye Wellness Innovators
- Data analysis: Two sample t test (continuous variables); Chi square (categorical variables); p<.05

**An engaged BWI is defined as a program participant who 1) communicates about wellness at least monthly, 2) motivates colleagues to participate in wellness activities at least monthly, and 3) plans a minimum of 2 wellness activities/year. These engagement measurements are displayed in Table 1 and 2 by letters “C”, “M”, and “A”.*

Results & Findings

Research Question 1:

- No statistically significant differences between Buckeye Wellness Innovator demographics and the level of engagement in a wellness champion program (**Table 1**)

Table 1: Summary of sample demographics and level of engagement in the BWI program

		Total P-value by engagement		
	(n=; %)	C	M	A
Gender		0.59	0.99	0.22
Male	22, (13)			
Female	140, (86)			
TOTAL	162			
Race		0.12	0.63	0.96
White	141, (89)			
Black	12, (8)			
Ind/Alask/Asian	3, (2)			
Multi-racial/Other	3, (2)			
TOTAL	159			
Education		0.35	0.36	0.61
Some College	9, (6)			
Ass. Degree	15, (9)			
Some master/doc	13, (8)			
Bachelor degree	56, (35)			
Master degree	56, (35)			
Prof/doctoral	13, (8)			
TOTAL	162			
Time as Innovator		0.86	0.89	0.59
1 year or less	61, (37)			
1-2 years	40, (25)			
2-3 years	34, (21)			
3 years or more	28, (17)			
TOTAL	163			

**P-value level of engagement is measured by the definition stated in the methods section of this study that incorporate the three areas a BWI must be engaged in:*

C= Communication, M=Motivation, A=Activities

Research Question 2:

- Significant differences were found between:
- Managerial support for the Innovator role in communication, colleague motivation, and planning wellness activities (**Table 2**)
 - Managerial support for colleagues’ health and wellness and the Innovator’s level of engagement in peer motivation (**Table 2**)

Table 2: Summary of perceived level of managerial support to Innovators in relation to self-reported level of engagement

		Total P-value		
	(n=,%)	C	M	A
Support for Role		.0055	<.0001	.0458
Not Supportive	51, (31)			
Very Supportive	63, (39)			
Extremely Supportive	49, (30)			
TOTAL	163			
Support for Colleagues		.1673	.0045	.3329
Not Supportive	58, (36)			
Very Supportive	71, (44)			
Extremely Supportive	34, (21)			
TOTAL	163			

**P-value level of engagement is measured by the definition stated in the methods section of this study that incorporate the three areas a BWI must be engaged in: C= Communication, M=Motivation, A=Activities*

Discussion/Recommendations

- Target a wide range of diverse individuals to recruit to the Buckeye Wellness Innovator program
- Conduct annual program evaluation to strengthen managerial support for the Buckeye Wellness Innovator.
- Involve direct supervisor in unit wellness strategy decisions
- Investigate reasons why some managers are more willing to support the role of the Wellness Innovator than others.

Limitations

- 40% response rate
- Minimal diversity in the BWI program; demographics do not reflect overall university demographics.

Acknowledgments

- This research (#2017E0049) has been reviewed and approved for compliance with the policy of the human subjects Institution Review Board

References

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